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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 SANAA 000607

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/27/2013

TAGS: [PGOV YM DOMESTIC POLITICS](#)

SUBJECT: TFI201:SANAA FSNS: ANXIETY AND HINTS OF BACKLASH

REF: SANAA 521

Classified By: Classified by DCM Alan G. Misenheimer, for reasons 1.5 b  
. and d.

11. (C) Summary: Sanaa FSNS report heightened worry from friends and relatives about their working at U.S. Embassy. Several expressed concern that they may unwittingly be the means to an attack on US personnel or property, and some feel that they themselves may become targets because of their association with the U.S. Mission. The Ambassador and DCM held a meeting with all the FSNS, and several section chiefs have met with their FSNS this week to take the pulse on the community, which provides a lens with which to view unofficial Yemeni reaction to current events. End Summary.

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Connection with U.S. Mission Questioned  
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12. (C) Several FSNS reported that their spouses, children, extended family and friends had expressed heightened concern about their working for the American Embassy and coming to work this week. They were particularly worried about Thursday, March 27th, the first day of the weekend after the March 21st violent demonstration. Many thought that demonstrations could begin that afternoon and several supervisors were approached concerning Embassy closure that day. (Note: Embassy Sanaa did move to StandFast on March 27 because of a government sponsored demonstration which was peaceful and uneventful. No demonstrations were held on March 28. End Note.) Other FSNS told us that they do not express their political views among friends and family, and in some cases try not to speak of their association with the Embassy. In one case, a third country FSN who may have been mistaken for an American had rocks thrown at her by children on the way to the Embassy.

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Fears of Violence Increasing  
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13. (C) One FSN reported going to "Al-Aql" mosque on Friday, March 21 and said that he would not have been surprised if worshipers had committed violence had the Imam called on them specifically to do so. He said people were very upset, and the Imam had compared US actions to the Mongols sacking Baghdad. Another FSN in a different section reported that he felt that the average person may be increasingly inclined towards violence. He added that the anger is still there, it is just not being expressed. FSNS also reported feeling more vulnerable in their commutes to and from the Embassy, fearing that they may be watched and could be targeted for their association with post.

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Work Relationships  
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14. (C) Some working relationships with ROYG officials and other Yemeni contacts, according to several FSNS in different sections, have broken down. Requests for information have been put off, or delayed, and some are feeling some backlash. Pol/Econ FSNS requested that we hold off on making new appointments right now due to political sensitivities. However, one of the development FSNS reported that this contacts at the Ministry of Health actively encouraged U.S. development activities to proceed at full speed in order to complete projects already underway.

15. (C) Supervisors have been extremely impressed with our FSN's sense of loyalty and commitment to the mission. Post affirms that while some of the external working relationships may have cooled, we have not seen any such reaction from our FSN employees. FSNS have been working at home during temporary Embassy closures, worked weekends to feed staff quartered in the Embassy, and provided valuable information while security procedures have curtailed much outside activity for the American community.

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Reaction to Increased Security Measures for FSNS  
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16. (C) The Ambassador met with FSNS on March 25 to discuss

new security concerns and to gauge public reaction to the war in Iraq. The Ambassador listened to all of their concerns and assured our FSNs that their concerns were being addressed and the FSNs were an integral part of the Mission team. New security procedures (Ref cable) involve increased screening for FSNs entering the building and moving FSN parking outside of the Embassy compound. One FSN said, "I don't care if they check me seven or eight times, security is for everyone." On March 26, Ambassador walked the Embassy perimeter with RSO, FSN committee representatives and Central Security Organization (CSO) on-site commander. A useful security exercise, it also served as a morale booster for our FSNs who work inside the Embassy, our Local Guard Force (LGF) and the CSO soldiers assigned to protect us.

17. (C) Comment: With heightened security procedures for American personnel limiting our outside contacts, post has become more reliant upon the information provided by our FSNs. This summary of their experiences provides a glimpse into the mood of Sanaa. End Comment.  
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